



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park
and Preserve

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Glacier Bay News Release

Effective date: 5AM August 7, 2004

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DESIGNATION OF VESSEL SPEED LIMITS IN GLACIER BAY FOR WHALE PROTECTION

In Accordance with Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations

13.65 (b)(3)(iv)(D)(2)(v)(A)(2)

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Superintendent Tomie Lee announced vessel speed and course restrictions for vessels traveling in the northern Beardslee Entrance and the waters surrounding Sandy Cove to protect the numerous humpback whales that have been sighted in the area. There are record high numbers of whales and cow/calf pairs in Glacier Bay this summer. The Park's vessel restrictions are intended to minimize the potential for disturbance and collisions.

All vessels using these areas are restricted to a maximum speed of no more than 10 knots through the water. All vessels greater than 18 feet in length travelling in these 'whale waters' areas are also required to maintain a mid-channel course, defined as no less than 1 nautical mile from shore or midway between opposite shores.

The northern Beardslee Entrance whale waters (see attached map) eastern boundary is defined by the Beardslee Islands motorless waters boundary due east of the north tip of Strawberry Island, and extending north to the north tip of Flapjack Island. The western boundary of the area is defined by an imaginary line connecting the north tip of Strawberry Island to the north tip of Boulder Island and over to the north tip of Flapjack Island. The southern boundary of the area is the designated Lower Bay whale waters boundary that includes the remainder of Beardslee Entrance.

The Sandy Cove whale waters area (also shown on the attached map) includes all of North and South Sandy Cove and Spokane Cove, and forms a buffer with a 1-mile radius centered around Sturgess Island. The northern boundary of the area begins at the northernmost point of the 1-mile buffer, and runs toward the mainland shore on a compass bearing of approximately 50 degrees magnetic to the first distinct point on the mainland shore north of North Sandy Cove. The western boundary begins at the westernmost point of a 1-mile radius from the center of Sturgess Island, and runs along a direct line to the south tip of South Sandy Cove. The southern boundary is defined by a line from the south tip of South Sandy Cove due east across the mouth of Spokane

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mainland shore.

The Superintendent also announced that the vessel speed limit in the Lower Bay whale waters would be reduced from 13 knots to 10 knots through the water. The record high number of humpback whale calves documented by Park whale biologists this summer indicates the need for extra caution. Motorized vessels are required to follow these speed and course restrictions at all times, except when wind or sea conditions would make it unsafe to do so.

All boaters are advised to proceed cautiously in areas where whales are present because they may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Boaters are also reminded that vessels are always prohibited from approaching within one-quarter mile of humpback whales in Park waters. If accidentally positioned within one quarter mile of a whale, vessel operators must slow immediately to 10 knots or less and steer the vessel on a steady course away from the whale (perpendicular to the whale's course) until their vessel is at least one quarter mile from the whale. The humpback whale is a federally listed endangered species that feeds on small schooling fish and krill in Alaska waters.

Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907)697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine radio. Information is also available on the Park's web site at:
<http://www.nps.gov/glba/pphtml/news.html>

Vessel Restrictions for Whale Protection

Effective August 7, 2004 until further notice



- Beardslee Islands motorless waters
- Mid-Channel Course through August 31, 2004
- Mid-Channel Course and 10 Knot Speed

Map Location



National Park Service
Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
GIS Team



5 0 5 10 15 Miles
1 : 551,474 1 inch = 8.70 miles